



## **The Progenitor** by **HolidayFeartree**

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**Summary:** This is a short story that is a prequel to the 2017 IT film. It tells the story of Pennywise's impregnation - a piece of "IT" lore which is confirmed according to Stephen King's official literature. I went ahead and published the entire story in one file. It is only 8,000 words - so it is the length of a short story.

# The Progenitor

## Title: The Progenitor Prologue

January, 1988.

It awakens.

Stirring in a place immersed beneath the earth – downreaching and deep in a wet, forgotten aperture – a growl hums from Its tired throat. It opens its collective eyes, its dreaded consciousness provoked by the world's unease, in a lair etched with darkness from its depths to its apex.

The Cycle has begun.

It feels the *urge* bubbling up inside. It gurgles with the desire to be swollen, to be full. *Hunger*.

It climbs.

Appendages outstretched, It grapples along the slick stone, ascending to the top of Its domain. A chamber awaits, painted with pale light, illuminating Its collection of Broken Things. It moves beyond the towering heap – a pile of demolition and bones, reaching an unfathomable height decorated by light from a nameless origin.

It moves.

Quicker and quicker, seeking the Exit to the World, Its pace fervently accelerates. The twists and turns of the underground drainage system have been known to be puzzlingly jungle-like to unfortunate visitors. Like rats in a maze; condemned to a labyrinth where all paths lead to death.

It changes.

Emerging from the dank, polluted waters of Its sewer tunnel, It raises a writhing appendage which convulses into the shape of a white gloved hand. Then, an arm... a leg... a torso. Rippling with energy, struggling against its own shape, Its unfamiliar anatomy transforms,

becoming recognizably humanoid. Its body is decorated and dressed in ivory embroidered silks, with silvery ruffs brightening Its pale neckline. Its face is the face of a man with a broad forehead, white skin, and red hair. Its lips are boldly painted, as red as blood. Crimson grin lines stretch from the corners of Its mouth to the curve of Its cheekbones. A gloved hand reaches down to Its abdomen, acknowledging an emptiness – a *longing*.

Pennywise the Dancing Clown craves flesh. However, there is *another* sensation pulsing beneath his hunger. A different breed of voracity, much quieter than his appetite, but resolute nonetheless.

The *Cycle* has begun.

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## Chapter 1: Jeffy

"Did you *rape* that girl?" barked the detective. Wrenched with frustration, he glared at the 16 year old who, seated in a metal chair parked beside a police desk, struggled against his own handcuffs.

"Fuck you!" spat the teen. "I want a fuckin' lawyer!" The boy was a resident hoodlum, dressed in ragged jeans and a black sleeveless muscle shirt. Shaved head. Flat nose. Squinted eyes. And a filthy complexion to match his soul.

The April weather was warm and humid when detective Jake Weber found Daniel Kankolenski straddled over a naked woman splayed out on wet pavement. The two were at a cross section of back roads, just outside of Derry. What in the living *hell* either of them were doing out there at that time of night was beyond Jake. The woman clearly had been knocked unconscious by the time the detective arrived. Meanwhile, Daniel had his knife out, which was all the evidence Weber needed to make an immediate arrest. In any case, *someone* had cut her. She was sliced on the forearm and across the belly. Surface wounds, really. Nothing deep. But there was blood on the boy's switchblade, which – again – was all the evidence the detective needed. He'd had run-ins with shits like Daniel before.

Jake narrowed his eyes on the boy. "We can profile DNA now. As soon as that knife comes back with *her* blood on it, your ass is being

charged with aggravated assault." Weber paused, taking in the brief look of worry on Daniel's pimply face. "And," he continued, "as soon as a doctor verifies you tried to stick more in her than a knife, your ass'll be behind bars."

The teen furrowed his brow, tenaciously shaking his head from side to side. "I didn't fuck her!" he yelled. "She was just lyin' there naked! I swear!"

"Yeah *right*," snorted Weber. "You expect me to believe that? Just what the hell else would you be doin' out there at 2 AM?"

Daniel swallowed, remembering he'd promised to meet with Jeff Escher to complete a simple drug transaction. Nothing fancy – just the weed and crank handed over by his supplier. It's not like he sold heroin or anything. But Daniel wasn't *about* to explain any of that to officer Weber. Luckily, he managed to ditch the drugs before those patrol lights started flashing. Too bad he failed to back away from the dead slut in the middle of the road. At least, Daniel *thought* she was dead, so he gave her a cut or two. He thought it'd be funny. Jeff probably took one look at the cop cars from somewhere in the distance and turned *right* around. Dude was over an hour late to complete the deal, anyway. *Asshole*.

Weber smacked his hand down hard on his desk, startling Daniel. "Last month, I had *two* sets of parents comin' in here demanding to file charges against *you*. They say you raped *both* their daughters at two different house parties."

Daniel scrunched his face and made a "pff!" sound at the officer's words.

"That's what you do, isn't it?" Jake patronized. "You go from party to party, sellin' your dope – peddlin' your shit. Then you find a girl and you give her a drink. You slip something in and wait for her to pass out. And then? Then you *do* whatever the hell you want! Isn't *that* how it goes?"

"I want a fuckin' lawyer," Daniel said through clenched teeth.

With snort of disgust, Weber rolled his eyes. The notion of giving this

bastard fair representation in court made his stomach turn. Call it a personal bias – the detective, himself, had a teenage daughter. "Pipe down. You'll get your lawyer," he nodded. "But you watch your back, you sick fuck." On beat with the word *fuck*, Jake thrust the heel of his boot hard against the leg of Daniel's chair, nearly kicking the kid right off his seat.

The detective pointed a finger right between the teen's squinting eyes. "Keep this up. You'll piss off the *wrong* guy one of these days. It's only a matter of time."

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The woman was delivered to the E.R. with only a disposable gurney sheet to cover her nudity. Worse yet, the paramedics who wheeled her in stated that she had no identification. Where would she have kept it in any case? At least that was the shoddy joke shared among the sleep deprived emergency room staff. But before long, the phrase "*possible rape*" was passed along to a host of nurses who immediately transferred the mysterious patient to the intensive care unit. They had to wait until she woke up before performing the necessary examination.

Shelly Sanders, R.N. was a trained sexual assault nurse. As she stopped by the woman's hospital room to check her chart, Shelly peeked through the cracked doorway to catch a glimpse of her patient for the night. To her surprise, the woman sat upright in the bed, looking around the hospital room with intense eyes.

"*Better to get this started now,*" Shelly thought. These sort of exams can take hours. She gently knocked on the door as she entered the room, hoping not to startle the woman. But upon crossing the threshold, Shelly spied her patient calmly staring at her, almost with a hint of inquisitiveness.

"Hello," smiled nurse Sanders. "My name is Shelly. I'll be your night nurse."

The woman's appearance indicated she was somewhere between her late twenties or early thirties. She had long lean extremities and a lean frame. Her muscles were almost *sinewy* around the necessary junctures of her elbows, knees, and shoulders. Her face was sharp and

perhaps she had too broad of a jaw to be considered *pretty*. Her skin looked pale against her thick, black eyebrows that boldly arched across a set of wide, dark eyes. She stared into Shelly with an almost chilling focus. The woman's hair was as equally as arresting as her eyes. Wild and thick, knotted with waves and curls that spilled from her scalp to her neck. Yet her hair's underside appeared shaved... or perhaps... cut. *Torn*? There was no even length to it. The hair was simply wild, almost like that of an animal's. Perhaps she was not quite *pretty*, but Shelly considered the woman *handsome*, nonetheless.

"I brought you something to wear," said Shelly, holding up a set of red cotton pajama pants and a matching sleeveless tank. "The hospital receives donations for clothing," she added. "Take them. They're yours." She set them on the bed.

Before leaving the room, Shelly's friendly voice dropped to a tone of sincerity. "Due to the nature of how the detective found you, we'd prefer to perform a pelvic exam – as long as you give your consent."

Without a word, the woman gave a nod. Shelly nodded back and explained that she would be sending down paperwork to confirm consent. As the nurse exited the hospital room, she paused in the hallway, taking a moment to collect her thoughts. The woman seemed distant, as though she didn't *quite* grasp what Shelly was asking her to do – as though she didn't understand the gravity of her situation. With the shake of her head, the nurse sighed and continued back to her station.

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Jeff Escher ran for his fucking life.

The 18 year old was hoping to be, by now, settled back into his trailer, inhaling lungfuls of the perfect mixture of ganja and meth. But *something* chased him off the path through the woods. It stalked around the trees, weaving in and out of shadows, hissing and growling.

"*It's a bear*," he thought, gasping for breath as he ran deeper through the woods. "*Or a mountain lion*." Whatever it had been, it was gaining on him. He could almost feel its spittle smattering against the back of his head as it leaped and lunged behind him. Every time Jeff glanced

over his shoulder, his pursuer was detectable by the sight of a swiftly moving shadow that unnaturally blobbed in and out of the surrounding darkness.

It was then that Jeff felt the wind knocked out of him. Some species of "*claw*" – be it lion or bear – had taken a swipe at his back, propelling him forward. The skin layered over his spine burned. He felt the slow warmth of blood trickle down his backside. Nevertheless, Jeff – high only on adrenaline tonight – managed to maintain his stride and continued running.

His hunter continued its pursuit.

Sometimes the thing felt *so close*, like it was about to strike, but then ...*nothing*. It was almost as if it decided to *hang back* every so often – like it had been playing with Jeff. His heart pounded so furiously against the cavity walls of his chest that he didn't think he had it in him to continue running. It was then that fear climbed up from his knees and gripped him in the throat. Jeff felt the acidic sensation of vomit bubbling up against his soft palette. He lurched forward and lost his dinner to the shadowy grass beneath his feet.

"Aww..." giggled a voice. "Is poor Jeffy sick?"

Jeff looked up. Horrified, he saw the face of a tall, white clown smirking down at him as his own puke dribbled from his chin. The woods were dark, but the clown was aptly illuminated in spite of the surrounding pitch of night. Its eyes were yellow and its hair was wild and red. It smiled a toothy grin with thick, blood stained lips.

"What the *fuck*?"

Before Jeff could collect his thoughts, a surge of adrenaline burst through him with paralytic dread as the freakish clown lunged upon him. The petrifying sight of uncountable rows of razor sharp teeth was the last thing that poor, sick "Jeffy" Escher ever saw.

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## Chapter 2: Life

Derry's children had gone missing for a few months now. It began in



early winter. Every two or so weeks brought a new missing person's case to the police department. Although, it wasn't *always* a child that had gone missing. Adults, rare as their disappearances were, had been added to the mix. In those cases, most people chalked it up to a desire to get the hell out of Derry – rather, that was the general consensus among officers. When kids went missing, there was suspected trouble plaguing the streets. When adults went missing – who could *blame* them? Still, the caseloads piled up and yet the department had barely reached the middle of their spring quarter.

Over a week had passed since the incident with Daniel Kankolenski. DNA evidence on the knife came back a positive match. Detective Weber had been correct – the little bastard cut that woman while she was helpless and prone in the middle of the street. The department was going to be able to press charges for aggravated assault after all. As to whether or not Daniel would be tried as an adult ... that was the tricky part.

But a recent call from the forensic medical examiner went a different route. Jake had not expected to hear what he was about to be told over the phone.

"Your Jane Doe wasn't raped," the examiner reported, almost too bluntly for the detective's level of patience.

"How is that even possible? I *saw* the way he had her pinned to the ground."

"There was no trace of his DNA from her culture," she said, matter-of-factly.

"Christ. We gotta nail this kid – I know he's been preying on teenage girls in town."

"That may very well be," said the examiner, "but *this* young woman was *not* sexually assaulted. The examination came back clean."

"Well," sighed Jake, "Good." He shook his head at his own behavior. "Apologies. I shouldn't be disappointed about that. Now she won't have picked up god-knows-what from that filthy prick of his. And for that matter she won't be saddled with carrying around his bastard."

"Eh. Hm..." The medical examiner nervously cleared her throat. "I don't think she'll have to worry about *that* with anyone."

"What do you mean?"

"I performed the examination myself. But it was the strangest thing..." Her voice trailed off.

Detective Weber set down the receiver and closed his office door. Pressing the phone back to his ear, he muttered, "*What* was?"

"She didn't... have a cervix, Jake."

"What?"

"No cervix. Nothing."

Jake shook his head. "Maybe she has a medical history? Maybe surgery?"

"No surgery," said the examiner. "Not that I needed to, but I *did* ask her about any surgery she might have had. She didn't seem to understand my question. She said nothing." She cleared her throat. "But Jake I've been doing this a long time – there was no sign of any internal incision."

"Huh," said Jake, "Aren't some folks just *born* that way?"

"Yes," replied the examiner. "I've never actually seen that condition before. But yes. And it's quite rare. I wanted to do a transvaginal ultrasound as a follow up. I was curious to see if she had any internal reproductive organs at all." She paused. The awkward silence lingered for a little under four seconds, yet it felt much longer. "But I'm sorry to report that we couldn't reach your Jane Doe for any kind of follow up. She left the hospital not long after the examination. She never signed out – and no one saw her leave."

Detective Weber thanked the examiner for reaching out, and the two promptly discontinued their conversation. Setting the receiver back to its cradle, Jake crossed his arms and sighed.

"Hell's bells."

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It traveled through the town of Derry, formless, shapeless, and unseen. Surfing the current of dread that had long since blanketed this town, It lapped at the appetizing aroma of fear. In an undetected, almost *lurking*, motion, Its pace slowed, drifting to the ground as It took on a male-bodied form, dressed in festive ruffs, bells, and silks. *His* most cherished form; after so much time, he could now shape it with ease.

And with further lack of difficulty, he grafted his white skin decorated with theatrically crimson designs. He grew his red hair, thick and wild, around a prominent skull that housed two glowing eyes through which he spied the World. For as long as he could recollect, he had named himself *Pennywise the Dancing Clown*.

For Pennywise, every few weeks had been a satisfactory ritual of scaring, feasting, and digesting. Fear was in season, blooming from county line to county line. Plentiful. Nourishing. It consumed Derry, like a metastatic illness.

...However...

Something *else* was in the air. It was not fear. Rather, it was not *only* fear. Not this time. Assuredly, Pennywise knew this town was prime hunting ground. Such was the way it had been for centuries. Without Derry's ambient fear, there would have been no reason to linger.

But something *else* drifted through the space around him, like a mistral of debauched conveyance. An ornamented, *epicurean* scent, not quite as unadorned as fear. Then... a small urge unsettled Pennywise from his typical instincts. The urge awakened a longing – an animalistic weakness.

"*What is this sensation?*" he wondered. "*It is not a hunger. It is not a thirst. But it is a craving.*" Pennywise was not the breed of aberration to question his own existence, but it had been in this instance – this very moment – that he pondered his age. How many centuries had he awakened and consumed? And the ultimate question that begged his attention... had he been *growing*? Yes. Thriving and budding – primed for some greater task. It occurred to Pennywise that he perhaps crossed a landmark in his dreadfully long age.

His senses returned his focus to the *scent*. It was faint. It was subtle. But, ever increasingly, it was powerful.

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The last bell of the final semester rang. School was officially *out* for the summer. Sarah Weber could not have been more relieved to be done with her junior year of high school. "*One more year to go*," she thought. "*Then I'm done*." Sarah and her friend, Katie Powers, hustled from the campus grounds, bustling with laughter, sharing summer plans with one another.

"What do you think about Jennifer's party this weekend?" asked Katie. "It's gonna be a costume party," she grinned.

Sarah pursed her lips. With the squint of her eyes and the tilt of her head, she frowned. "Ehhh. I dunno." Her father was a cop. After hearing the stories he'd shared around the dinner table over these last few months, she knew he wasn't about to let his only daughter go out partying.

"Come *on*." Katie nudged Sarah with her shoulder.

The two walked with stacks of school materials clutched to their chests, sauntering down the quaint neighborhood street which led directly to Sarah's home – detective Jake Weber's house. Sarah explained to her over-eager friend that there was no way in Hell she'd be capable of convincing her dad to allow her to attend the party.

Katie grinned. "Easy," she said. "Say you're spending the night at my house. That's what I'm telling my mom. This Saturday, I'll technically be over at *your* house."

"Get real. That never works. We're gonna *both* end up grounded all summer long."

With a pleading look in her eyes, Katie replied, "Don't be such a bummer. You'll have fun. *Please* come with me to the party?" Smiling, she added. "You'll regret it if you don't."

"You *always* get drunk at those parties." Sarah shook her head.

"Yeah," laughed Katie. "IT'S a party."

"*Really* drunk."

The Weber house was visible from just around the corner. Sarah slowed her pace when she saw her mother, Amanda, walking carefully out the front door to retrieve the mail. Amanda waddled like an overfed duck. She was thirty eight weeks pregnant – the woman's water was ready to break at any given time.

Katie shook her head. "Just *come* with me, will you?"

"Lower your voice," Sarah hissed, blatantly nodding at her mother who was within earshot.

Ignoring the plea, a smirk inched its way across Katie's face. "Justin Henning will be there." Her voice mockingly sang over the syllables of his name.

"*Lower* your voice!" Sarah angrily whispered. She pulled Katie off the sidewalk, into the grass, hoping to be out of her mother's view. "And please *shut* up about Justin Hen—" Sarah's words were cut short as her toe kicked up under a tree root arched high above the grass. Dropping her school planner, pencils, and notebooks to the ground, she quickly steadied herself with her arms open wide.

Katie grabbed onto her friend. "Whoa there. You okay?"

"Ugh..." said Sarah, gesturing to the mess. "*Look* at this!"

She and Katie knelt down, gathering her notebooks. As they did so, the girls spied another hand reaching down, retrieving Sarah's planner from the muddy grass. The two paused what they were doing and looked up. Their eyes met with the dark gaze of a lean woman in red cotton pants and a red tank top. Her black hair spun wildly from her head in all different lengths.

Sarah stood. "Hi," she said politely. "Are you Ms. ...*umm*... uh sorry, I don't recognize you. – What's your name?"

The woman looked down at the planner in her hand. It had been paperclipped to the current month – *May*. "M...May..." she replied.

"May?" asked Katie. "May *what*?"

The woman nodded. "May. And you are Sarah."

"Oh," Sarah said, taken aback. "Y – yes." She reached out to retrieve her planner.

May handed it back, not once taking her eyes off the girl.

Pointing her thumb to the road behind them, Sarah asked, "Have we met? Do you live on this street?"

"Yes. I believe I do. I *live* here." May smiled. She looked around, eyeing the trees and the surrounding homes. "There is *much* alive here, isn't there?"

"Ooo-kay..." said Katie, taking Sarah's arm. She'd gathered up the last of her friend's books.

"Girls?" a voice called out.

All three young women glanced over to see Amanda Weber gingerly walking toward them, belly out, with a sturdy hand bracing her lower back. Pointing to her daughter, she said, "Hurry back to the house, Sarah. Your dad's gonna be home any minute. I need you to help me put the rest of the groceries away before we can start dinner."

"Welp, nice to meetcha May." Katie leaned closer to Sarah and whispered, "Ugh, let's get *out* of here."

"Oh! I'm sorry," Amanda smiled as she noticed May standing beside the girls. "Amanda Weber." The pregnant woman strained to balance her weight with the one hand still propped to her back as she extended her other hand to the stranger in red.

May's black eyes darted their focus to the woman's swollen belly. Ignoring Amanda's attempt at a handshake, she placed both of her palms on the mother's stomach. May looked at Amanda and smiled. "It has grown," she declared with interest.

Katie flashed a look of bewilderment at Sarah.

With an awkward laugh, Amanda replied, "Yes, well, they *do* grow."

She glanced at her teenage daughter and added, "A *lot*." With an amused grin, she concluded, "You think they eat nonstop when they're babies, but then they get to be teenagers and their appetites are even worse!"

"Mom!" Sarah flushed.

"Yes," nodded May, removing her hands from Amanda's stomach. "They must feed."

"You have any children?" asked Amanda.

"Countless," May answered with a nod.

An uncomfortable silence hung between the four of them. Then Amanda smiled nervously and said, "*Well*, it was pleasant to meet you. Do say hello again. Come on girls, let's hurry home."

"Bye," said Sarah, as her mother and her friend dragged her off. As she walked away, she looked back over her shoulder. May stood in the grass, intently watching the three of them with a certain unnaturalness about the way her own legs held her up. Sarah found it a bit unsettling.

"What a weirdo," said Katie.

"Don't be rude," Sarah's mother lectured. "She seemed ...*nice*."

Katie shrugged. "Yeah. Still a weirdo."

May watched the trio disappear into Sarah's house. "Beautiful," she muttered. She had an eye for such *things*. Works of art. Works of wonder. Things that were not *just arbitrary things* but rather needful in the great web of creation and destruction. These were animated vessels that teemed with life.

The mother was a thing of divine magnificence. Godly in her current state, if only for a moment. The mother, like any mother, was sealed with nature's best mortar – skin and bone and meat. She was plump and wrapped, growing something inside of her that would soon destroy its way out. Something that would, in its violent, chaotic hunt for separation, collapse its amniotic cradle, bursting from its

mother like a screaming, calamitous flower.

*Life.*

For days now, May had been wandering the streets of Derry. She passed in and out of sight among the residents. The woman's presence was frequent enough to disturb the few townsfolk with which she came into contact. But, up to this point, still infrequent enough not to gain the attention of detective Jake Weber.

With eyes as dark as ink and muscle bound limbs as pale as paper, May walked and swayed like a ghost in red. She headed toward a small, wooded path that led away from the neighborhood streets. Back into the surrounding trees she crept, for that was where she had spent most of her time in this unfamiliar place.

*Searching.*

For days now, May slunk and skulked in and out of creeks and quarries, seeking the mysterious *pull* that drew her to this place. There was a *magnetism* in Derry. A steady tug. It reached far. When she had first felt its touch, May knew the time had come. It summoned her from a tranquil state of nihilism, into a wild awakening from Beyond.

But upon succession of her general objective, May's trail went cold. She felt it all around her, however her destination had been saddled with *no* palpable direction. Nevertheless, her prospect was here. She felt it. It overran Derry like a swarm. It twisted May in circles. Rushing and crowding. Flocking and herding. Multitudes of it. Then... a singularity... disappearing like a moth against the sky.

*Regardless... it is here.*

Tired, May discovered a cozy spot between a grove of small trees and settled herself down onto the ground. The blades of grass beneath her tickled as they poked against the thin fabric of her clothing. Moving ever so slightly, the grass spread and turned green – greener than it had been in ages. May crossed her legs, reaching her long arms above her head as the setting sunlight glinted between the leaves above.



She glanced down. A dried up earthworm had been abandoned to the weeds. So large, it almost resembled an infant snake. May lowered her fingers to the grass and plucked it up. The worm's body had become a string of arid meat. Staring at it, she studied it. Her black eyes locked onto the worm's disfigured form.

*Life.*

Slowly, moisture returned to the creature's flesh. Blood and a beating heart resurrected in its shell. The thing began to squirm in May's hand, protesting the very idea of being restrained. Beaming a satisfied grin, she lowered the worm to the ground and it wriggled off, disappearing beneath the lush, green grass.

*Go on.* May closed her eyes. ...*Consume.*

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### Chapter 3: Here I Dwell

"I'm tellin' you, I can't move your product right now," Daniel said to the young man in black. The two hid quietly in an alleyway between a run down liquor store and a century old house that had long since been boarded up.

The young man wore black slacks and a black button down dress shirt. His hair was also slicked and black. He eyed Daniel with suspicion. "What about your regulars?" he asked.

"I only had *one* regular. Jeff. I haven't seen his ass in over a week. Almost two weeks now. Fucker probably skipped town." Daniel huffed and scratched at the itchy sweat on his forehead. "I can't be selling your stuff right now. I gotta court date comin' up. I'm in hot water as it is."

The man in black advanced closer to Daniel. So close that the 16 year old had to crane his neck upward to look him in the eyes. A sense of foreboding overcame the teenager. "You'll unload the drugs," said the man in a low, commanding tone. "Or you'll feel the agony of what it's truly like to be in hot water." He paused. "*Boiling.*"

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The smell of fresh meat congregated en masse in a confined, solitary place. Ravenous, Pennywise approached the tall, lavish house on its wide, grassy lawn. The structure's exterior vibrated with the booming, rhythmic pulse of music. The sounds erupted at decibel levels deafening enough to drown the screams of his most recent meal. Indisputable smears of blood spread across his pallid chin, and the clown grinned wide at the sight of eight youngsters boisterously approaching the estate's front door.

A young man dressed in a Superman costume greeted them at the entrance, allowing the herd of teens access to the party at hand. Pennywise took notice that the doorman wasn't the *only* one who sported a costume. Each of the party-goers flocking to the front porch wore some fabricated ensemble or another. This wasn't the season for their Halloween festivities, ergo he did not expect such a tradition to be so uncharacteristically celebrated. Nevertheless...

*This was going to be fun.*

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Sarah and Katie pushed their way through the sweaty crowd that filled up Jennifer's living room. There were so many kids crammed into one space that some of them began to congregate halfway up the staircase. The two girls were disguised as fairies, complete with plastic wings, hair glitter, and frilly princess dresses.

"I'm gonna grab a drink!" Katie yelled over the blaring music.

"Don't leave me alone," begged Sarah. She crossed her arms uncomfortably, shying away from each body that pushed its way past her.

"You'll be fine," smiled Katie. She pointed to the foot of the staircase and winked at Sarah. "Look over there."

Sarah glanced at the stairs. Among the group of teens stacked on top of one another, dancing in sync to the beat of the music, there was a skinny young man wearing a rubber wolf's mask.

"That's Justin!" cried Katie. "At least... I *think* so!" And with that, she flounced off into the crowd to begin her search for booze.

"Damn it, Katie." Sarah angrily pressed her lips together. Knowing that was likely the last she would see of her friend until the night was over, she twirled around on her heel and pushed her way into the direction of Justin Henning.

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"Hello, *lovely* lady," swooned Superman, eyeing the young woman in red who approached the door.

May smiled. "Hello Kevin," she said.

Stunned, Kevin asked, "D – do I know you?"

Ignoring his question, May walked past the boy in the cape, merging into the crowd that swelled inside of Jennifer's house. *It's here*. That force that drew her. It wasn't in the woods. It wasn't on the streets. She felt it here, in this place, between the dancing young and the rattling walls.

May positioned herself in the center of it all, between the movers and the watchers – sandwiched within a cacophony of jumping bodies and musical vibrations.

She stretched her naked arms to the ceiling, closed her eyes, and allowed the pulse of the room to consume her very movement.

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"Justin!" Sarah shouted over the noise. She'd tapped the boy in the wolf's mask on his shoulder. He turned and looked at her, shaking his head because he couldn't hear her.

Sarah leaned forward and cupped her hand over her mouth, pressing it against his mask. "It's me," she shouted. "Sarah!"

The boy in the wolf mask nodded, then lifted his hand and gave her a friendly wave.

Sarah blushed under her fairy makeup and smiled. Glancing over her shoulder, she looked back at the center of the dance floor. She spied a striking woman in red, moving to the music in almost a tribal sort of way. "*May*?" she said under her breath.

May glanced over at Sarah, acknowledging the young girl with a smile. Then the woman in red turned away, continuing her hypnotic movements. Others nearby seemed to dance in tandem with May, as if she'd cast a spell with the sheer mobility of her hips, arms, and legs. Everything slowed down, like a dream, and Sarah could not help but stare. It gripped her mind, swallowing it into a state of almost catatonia.

Then Sarah noticed something else. A tall man, dressed like a *sinister* clown, watched May with intensity. His head tilted with curiosity as his grin widened, revealing what Sarah swore were sharp teeth behind those red, plump lips. The clown's eyes seemed to glow yellow under the blinking dance lights that twirled and flashed from above, bouncing off his white skin and ivory attire like a canvas of renaissance silks and theater makeup. It was as if he had been watching only May, somehow, through the heavy crowd of people. His glare fixed on her body's every movement. Furthermore, Sarah could have sworn May stared right back at him – their eyes locked, as if they had been communicating on some primordial level.

A hand grabbed Sarah by the shoulder. "Sarah, right?" It was Justin, still wearing the wolf's mask. She nodded.

The boy pointed up the stairway. "Let's go somewhere quieter – where we can talk!" He handed Sarah a plastic tumbler filled with beer and gestured for her to follow him up the stairs.

---

*I see you.*

***And I see you.***

*What is this place?*

***It is mine. My place to feast.***

*This house? Or this town?*

***Both.***

*Would you dance with me?*

***I dance a different dance. And you are not what you seem.***

*Nor are you.*

***We are not what we seem.***

*I have searched for you. Through space. Through time. Through the  
endlessness. And here you dwell.*

***Here I dwell.***

*I have learned that you are not easy to find for those whom are not on  
your menu.*

***I am found when I want to be. Seen when I present myself.***

*As it should be.*

***I sensed your presence not long ago. It has plagued me.***

*I am here with a purpose. I am here for you.*

***You hunt me?***

*As you hunt the others. My purpose, however, is greater.*

***Tonight, this was to be my killing ground. You interrupt my plans.***

*I intend to interrupt nothing. Proceed with your plans. Then allow me to  
proceed with mine.*

***Very well.***

*First, however, I am compelled to warn an acquaintance.*

***I will not give you much time.***

*Then I will hurry.*

---

"Little quieter up here, dontcha think?" asked Justin. He and Sarah  
lounged on a small bed located in the guest room at the end of the  
upstairs hallway.

Sarah nodded. "Much nicer, to be honest. I... I don't *do* parties."

"I can understand that," said Justin. Gesturing to her drink, he asked "How's the beer?"

Sarah lifted the tumbler to her lips and took a big gulp, so as to not appear *uncool*. "It's... alright." With a reluctant wrinkle between her brows, she drank the rest down, wiped her mouth, then choked a bit. Coughing, she continued to wipe her mouth.

"What's wrong?"

"No." Sarah shook her head. "I'm sorry." She set the empty cup on the floor. "It's disgusting. I *hate* beer." She looked down at her lap. "I – I don't drink."

"Why are you sorry?"

"I just didn't want to seem rude," shrugged Sarah. In that moment she looked at Justin and laughed. "Hey... Justin, you *can* take off that ridiculous rubber mask, you know?"

"Huh?" he replied. His hands felt for the mask on his face. "Oh. Uh... well." He grasped at the bottom of the wolf's mask, peeling it off his head like a second skin. "Sorry... but... I'm not Justin, whoever that is."

Shaking her head, Sarah stared at a squinty-eyed boy with pimples and a shaved head. "Who the hell are you?" she asked. Her throat started to close up. The room swirled a bit and it felt like a brick was inside her head.

"I'm Daniel," he grinned, then crossed his arms. "Probably don't recognize me because I dropped out a year ago." He peered at Sarah, as if examining her. "How you feelin'? You okay?"

Sarah's stomach churned a bit, and her mind became fuzzier. Daniel's flat-nosed face gradually blurred into the walls of the surrounding bedroom. "I fff..." Sarah stammered. "...fee... feel sick." She felt Daniel's hands laying her back onto the bed. He was talking to her but she couldn't hear his exact words. It was as if he spoke underwater.

"No," Sarah mumbled. The ceiling spun from above, twirling like a merry-go-round.

"Relax," said Daniel. His hands searched Sarah's dress for the proper button, clasp, or zipper. Anything to get her clothes off.

"Sarah Weber?" said a voice.

"The fuck!" Startled, Daniel shot to his feet and spun around. His chest pounded. He was ready to insist he was helping a drunk friend – helping her to sleep it off – to take a nap. *Yeah*. That would work. No one could prove otherwise.

In the doorway stood a woman in red, her thick black hair ornamenting her long neck and striking jawline. She stared innocently at Daniel and Sarah, unblinking and unmoving. The woman pointed to Sarah and repeated the girl's name. Then she cocked her head to the side, inquisitively. "Daniel Kankolenski," she said.

"Do I fucking know you or something?" he snapped. Then Daniel eyed the woman from head to toe, piecing it all together. "Wait. I *do* know you. You're that random naked *bitch* from the other week. I'm in huge fucking trouble because of *you*!"

May entered the room, uninterested in the boy's complaining. She approached Sarah who was unconscious on the bed. "Sarah Weber, you must leave now." Her voice sounded almost commanding. "It is no longer safe here."

Daniel sneered. Pulling his knife from his back pocket he held it to May's throat. "What exactly did you see? You gonna pull *more* shit on me? Is that it? How long were you standing in that doorway?"

Ignoring Daniel's threat, May reached for Sarah's arm. "Sarah Weber, it is time to go."

Daniel grabbed May by the hair and tugged her away from the girl. "I should've fuckin' cut your throat so you couldn't talk no more," he hissed into May's ear.

"Daniel," said May, reaching to her head, trying to remove his grip

from her hair. "I do not understand."

He lifted his leg and kneed May in the back. Confused, she buckled to the ground. "You're gonna understand." He parted his zit covered lips and spit on May. His saliva landed on her cheek. Daniel twirled his knife a bit, then pointed it at the woman in red. "I'm gonna finish what I began – starting with your face." He knelt down, bringing the blade close to May's forehead while gripping her chin with his grubby hand.

"You should not touch me," May warned.

"Why?" asked Daniel. "You gonna try to hurt me?"

Her wide, black eyes stared hard into the boy's squinted pinpricks. "Not at all," she said. "I could never hurt you. I could never kill."

Suddenly, the entire house erupted with a great shake, as if it was lifted from its very foundation and dropped back to the earth. The lights went out. From below, the sound of broken glass and screams rose to the floor above. Daniel sprang to his feet, defensively pointing his knife.

"I could never kill," May continued. She slowly stood. "I am life. I give life."

Daniel rushed to the bedroom's window. The screams from below now drifted across the wide lawn as dozens of frantic teenagers ran to their cars. Some disappeared off into the woods on foot, while others sobbed and cried as they stumbled and tripped, desperately trying to escape an unknown terror.

"But *I'm* here now, Daniel," laughed a giddy voice.

The boy whipped around. Pennywise towered over him, his ruffles and clothing had been drenched in fresh blood. He smiled wide, revealing rows of pointed teeth. Such a sight was enough to reduce Daniel to mute, slack-jawed, and wholly immobilized madness.

"I cannot hurt. I cannot kill," said May softly, staring at the back of Pennywise as he loomed over the terrified boy. "But It will. It is the End of Things – and It will skin you to your bones."



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## Chapter 4: Bond

"Sarah... *honey*?"

Sarah felt a hand gently shake her arm. Her eyes groggily opened to the sight of her mother seated by her bedside, reaching out to her. "M... mom?" She looked around and recognized the walls of her own bedroom, decorated with the tacky floral wallpaper her mother had put up years ago. "Mom?" she repeated.

"Are you alright, Sarah? Why aren't you at Katie's tonight? And what are you *wearing*?"

Sarah sat up. She was still dressed in her fairy costume and makeup. "I don't..." Sarah squeezed her eyes shut and shook her head. "I don't feel good, mom. I don't wanna be at Katie's house."

Amanda nodded, carefully standing up to leave the room. "Alright. But make sure you wash up before getting into bed. You're about to stain the pillowcase with all that makeup." Exiting the room, she stopped at the doorway and looked back at her daughter. "I love you."

"Yeah," Sarah replied. "I... I love you too, mom."

---

The creature walking with Pennywise intrigued him in ways he had not yet come to imagine. He strode beside her, with his gloved hands locked behind his back. His eyes fixed on May, as though she were a cosmic enigma. Her scent was overwhelming now, even more appetizing than that of fear. He positioned himself closer to May as they continued their trek down the murky depths of the sewer system.

"I am unclear as to how long I can remain here," she said. Her voice echoed along the narrow tunnel. "But I am overjoyed to have discovered you."

The two came to a clearing, wide open and dark. What little light found its way this far in only served to illustrate the glinting moisture

along the black flooring.

"And what do you plan for me?" he asked, cocking his crimson-haired head to the side.

May reached a hand to his cheekbone – or rather the material fabrication of such. "What meaning would either of us have without each other?"

Pennywise gripped the back of her neck and squeezed, pulling her close. "What magnificence would your empires hold if not for the threat that they should fall?"

May stared into his burning yellow eyes. "Fear is only inspired as long as the chance at life exists."

He leaned down, pressing his lips against hers. On this material plane, the two must submit to the laws of their chosen physical forms, unless they should decide to shapeshift yet again. Locked in a corporeal kiss, the rampaging shapes beneath their skin beckoned to one another in the otherworldly, unheard voices.

"Hopelessness numbs fear," May whispered against his teeth.

"It sours the meat," Pennywise hissed back. His breath teemed with the sickening, sweet aroma of blood.

They kissed again, this time embraced between long, grappling limbs. Pennywise tore at May's red clothing, dropping shreds of it to the dank ground. She felt his own clothing dematerialize away, revealing smooth white flesh pressed upon her own. His penis hardened against her, like a warm, firm appendage, reaching for the folds of her genital skin. She moaned a little into his ear, enticing him to grip her harder. With long, black claws that protruded through the fingertips of his white gloves he cradled her parallel to the ground. May's legs wrapped around his lean hips, tightening the grip of her thighs to his flesh. Pennywise slid his cock inside the facsimile of her vagina, pumping into May with a determination that enticed her to lubricate his steady exit and entry.

As he did so, her eyes widened and their whites became black, from

lid to lid. She opened her mouth to growl out a moan, revealing rows of her own jagged teeth and a tongue that was pointed like a snake's. Pennywise thrust into her harder, pushing higher, reaching deep. His monstrous breath panted against her slim neck as dark, barbed quills began to emerge along the expanse of his spined back. May moaned in tandem with his grunting and cries, and the two pressed firmly into one another until they felt the flesh of their torsos meld together, creating a two-backed beast that was now linked at the ribs.

It was at that moment Pennywise felt her inside of him, rushing through him like a hot torrent, spilling into his being. May gripped his shoulders as he continued to fuck her deep and hard, all the while he whimpered into her ear at the sensation of her ejaculate filling his fertile cavity deep within.

*I build my blocks. You kick them over. But now there is something inside of you, Eater of Worlds.*

***I feel them. I feel their hunger.***

*You will be ravished. More so than you have ever been.*

***This gestation will not be brief, will it Seed-Bearer?***

*Beauty demands time. What I've given you is beautiful. Everything I have created is beautiful.*

***And what created us?***

*You ask for the starting point of a circle? I am ill equipped to compose an answer to such a question.*

Their unholy cries echoed through the sewer system of the town, reverberating for miles until the final freakish climax was met and both creatures had tired their muscles, exhausted by the physical limitations of this material plane. Silence fell. The tunnels went quiet. Hours had passed as the two cradled one another. Half-transformed, nude, and unapologetic, they curled along the cold, wet pavement of the sewers below Derry.

May was fast asleep, having not hibernated for an incomprehensible amount of time. Pennywise stood, lifting her into his arms. He carried

her the rest of the way, climbing down deep into the depths from which he had awakened. There, he gently placed her in the shadows, to be blanketed by the serenity of the quiet darkness.

"I..." he whispered into her ear, "have never felt a *bond* such as this." He looked her over, spying the parts of her that appeared humanoid, clashing with the parts of her that were beautifully monstrous. "I only serve myself," he said. Then he touched his swelling abdomen and said, "But now there are a select handful of others I must consider..."

---

Months had passed. Exacerbated by his condition, Pennywise's hunger had worsened. Deaths and disappearances throughout Derry had worsened. All the while, May, the one who gifted him the life he carried still slumbered deep in his lair. And all too often, Pennywise had to leave her side to resurface to the town, frightening and consuming all he could.

The Cycle had been altered. Because of the gift of *life*, death was ever the more mandatory.

The chaos of life, thought Pennywise, was the prerequisite for destruction. And so, he climbed through the tunnels, reaching for each black wall with his alien grip, clawing at the stone which led him closer to the streets. His hunger raged. Even the slightest glimpse of the light from above made his toothy, unending mouth water.

The light peered down upon him from the narrow opening of the sewer above. Rain poured through the tunnel, splashing against his wild, horrific form. Pennywise heard the sound of a child cry out, and moments later something small flitted through the sewer opening, landing at his feet. He reached down to pick it up, waiting for the sight of small, innocent eyes to search for the very thing he'd discovered.

The little boy peeked into the sewer. Pennywise's hunger erupted, and it took all his strength to keep it under control.

"Hiya Georgie," He grinned, stepping forward from the shadows. "What a *nice* boat."

**The End**

Comments and praise are most welcome.